

RICHARD V. ALLEN

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STATEMENT BY
RICHARD V. ALLEN, CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON NATIONAL SECURITY & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE
To The
1980 Republican Party Platform Committee
Washington

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We call for a series of specific measures to strengthen, on an urgent basis, the nation's intelligence community.

In recent years, the Carter Administration and the Democratic-controlled Congress, assisted by numerous single-issue lobbyists, have drastically weakened the capability of the U. S. to collect foreign intelligence and to protect our internal security. This unilateral disarming of our intelligence agencies, each a vital element in our total defense structure, has continued and accelerated during the Carter-Mondale Administration.

These attacks have resulted in: the drastic crippling of the intelligence community; a severe lowering of morale in the intelligence agencies; a loss of public confidence in our intelligence system; and the reluctance of friendly foreign services and American citizens in the private sector to cooperate with U. S. agencies for fear that important national secrets will not be protected in the U. S.

The result is that the intelligence community has lost much of its ability to supply the President, senior U. S. policy officials and Congress with the best possible information and with timely warnings of threats to our security.

Recent events in Afghanistan, Iran and elsewhere around the world compel us to take without delay the following first steps to strengthen our intelligence capability.

1. The President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB),

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abolished by President Carter as one of his first official acts, must be reestablished as a permanent nonpartisan body of distinguished and experienced Americans to perform a constant "audit" to make certain that national intelligence resources and performance are adequate for national security requirements.

2. A crash effort must begin to restaff the CIA with capable, knowledgeable people after the Carter-Mondale Administration's firings of experienced CIA personnel.
3. Another center for the production of intelligence estimates must be created in order to enhance the quality of estimates by constructive competition.
4. Legislative action must be taken to help American intelligence officers and their agents operate safely and efficiently overseas.

We urge that:

- New legislation be drafted to provide American corporations or other entities in the private sector with immunity in connection with any lawsuits directed against them for providing intelligence officers with cover.
- Designated U. S. government agencies operating abroad be required to furnish intelligence officers full credentials and appropriate cover assignments.
- No legislation be drafted, as was the case with S. 2525, that will inhibit or prohibit any American citizen from lending assistance to his country's clandestine services if he so desires.

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5. We must take three additional important steps to protect our most vital national security information:
 - Strong support must be given to legislation now being considered by the Congress which will invoke criminal sanctions against those who disclose the identities of U. S. intelligence officers serving abroad under cover.
 - Criminal sanctions must be legislated and enforced to punish those whose work gives them access to sensitive information and who then make unauthorized disclosure of the sources and methods used by U. S. intelligence agencies.
 - The Hughes-Ryan Amendment must be changed to limit Congressional access to some of our most sensitive intelligence secrets to members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and their designated staff members.
6. The Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act -- while well intentioned -- have greatly hindered the intelligence agencies in carrying out their missions. These Acts should now be amended so that: (A) meaningful background checks can be made on individuals being considered for employment in sensitive government positions; (B) these Acts cannot be exploited by those who abuse their intent by diverting the intelligence agencies from their primary responsibilities to spending thousands of man years responding to the requests by anyone seeking information, including foreign nationals, sometimes capricious or malicious in intent, including foreign nationals.

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7. The sphere of "intermediate action" is vitally important to sound intelligence. Our government must have the capability to covertly influence events vital to our national security. Only the United States among the great powers denies itself the weapon of intermediate or covert action. Particularly we need to be able to help leaders of friendly governments, who fear too conspicuous association with the United States, in their efforts to maintain their own national security.

We believe that the great majority of American citizens are weary of repetitive and often self-serving attacks on the intelligence agencies. We believe that adequate safeguards exist to insure that past abuses will not recur, and we want our intelligence services again -- and soon -- to be second to none, so that the United States can discharge adequately and faithfully its role in world affairs during these critical times.

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